

be complete and when the filter material, which is not expected to raise the cost of cigarettes, could be put into production. Mr. Strickman said he would "guess by this fall."

The filter material "presumably" will be manufactured by the tobacco companies, Dr. Kirk said, and it "may not" be marketed under the Columbia University name.

Dr. Kirk underscored his remark of "no claims" for the Strickman filter other than its ability to lessen tar and nicotine in the inhaled cigarette smoke. Columbia spokesmen said there was no information about the filter's effect on other components of cigarette smoke, including polonium²¹⁰, hydrogen cyanide, and carbon monoxide, all of which have been held suspect as health hazards for the smoker.

Surgeon General Makes Statement

Early reactions to the Columbia announcement included a statement by U.S. Surgeon General William H. Stewart, who said, "We welcome all efforts to reduce the amount of tar and nicotine which reaches the smoker's body." If the "Columbia filter" does that, he said, "it could benefit many who are unwilling or unable to stop smoking." But, he warned, this "can never provide full protection [which] can only come through giving up cigarettes altogether or not taking up the habit in the first place."

The president of the American Cancer Society, Dr. Ashbel C. Williams, observed that "the report of a new cigarette filter, given extraordinary sponsorship by a great university," seemed "of far less scientific significance" than the previous day's report by HEW Secretary Gardner. "We would welcome evidence on the biological effect of cigarettes with this new filter," he said; "however, the American Cancer Society believes the only safe rule today is not to smoke cigarettes."

Tobacco companies responded to the Columbia announcement largely by saying they were "interested." Most of them hastened to add, however, that there is no proved causal connection between smoking and disease.

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